



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FEBRUARY 26, 2004
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UPDATE: PROJECT CEASEFIRE
RAYTOWN FELON SENTENCED FOR POSSESSION OF FIREARM

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Raytown, Mo., man was sentenced in federal court today for being a felon in possession of a firearm. Today's sentencing, Graves said, marks additional progress under Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

Aaron W. Whittler, 30, of Raytown, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner this morning to eight years in federal prison without parole.

On Oct. 7, 2003, **Whittler** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm. By pleading guilty, **Whittler** admitted that he was in possession of a Ruger 9 mm pistol on July 2, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Whittler** has a 2002 criminal felony conviction for delivery of a controlled substance, two 2001 criminal felony convictions for trafficking a controlled substance, and a 1998 criminal felony conviction for unlawful use of a weapon.

Whittler was originally charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on July 10, 2003, in Kansas City.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rudolph R. Rhodes, IV. It was investigated by the Jackson County, Mo., Drug Task Force, the Raytown, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Project Ceasefire

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow